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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of	:
Christian, et al.	:
Application No. 09/991,262	: DECISION ON PETITION
Filed: November 20, 2001	: UNDER 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3)
Attorney Docket No. A-58631-5 RFT/THR	:

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), filed August 2, 2004 (certificate of mailing date July 28, 2004), to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 for the benefit of priority to the prior-filed nonprovisional applications set forth in the amendment filed concurrently with the instant petition.

The petition is **GRANTED** with respect to application no. 08/089,372, filed July 8, 1993.

A petition for acceptance of a claim for late priority under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is only applicable to those applications filed on or after November 29, 2000. Further, the petition is appropriate only after the expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). In addition, the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) must be accompanied by:

- (1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(i) of the prior-filed application, unless previously submitted;
- (2) the surcharge set forth in § 1.17(t); and
- (3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Commissioner may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

The instant nonprovisional application was filed after November 29, 2000, and the claim herein for the benefit of priority to the prior-filed nonprovisional application is submitted after expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). Therefore, this is a proper petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), with respect to application no. 08/089,372.

As for application no. 08/440,522, the current procedure where a claim for priority under 37 CFR §§ 1.78(a)(3) is not included in the first sentence of the specification or in an ADS but does appear either in the oath or declaration or a transmittal letter filed with the application and the Office notes the claim for priority, no petition will be required to accept a late claim for priority. This is because the application would have been scheduled for publication on the basis of the information concerning the claim submitted elsewhere in the application within the time period set forth in 37 CFR §§ 1.78(a)(2)(ii). However, on the other hand, if the USPTO does not note the claim for priority to the prior-filed application(s) set forth in the oath or declaration or transmittal letter submitted with the application, a petition will be required to accept a late claim priority under § 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3).¹ In the instant case, the Office noted the claim for priority of application no. 08/440,522 found on the transmittal letter, as shown by its inclusion in the U.S. Patent Application Publication Related U.S. Application Data section.

In view of the above, a petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is unnecessary for application no. 08/440,522.

With respect to application no. 08/089,372, the petition complies with the requirements for a grantable petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) in that (1) a reference to the above-noted, prior-filed nonprovisional applications has been included in an amendment to the first sentence of the specification following the title, as provided by 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(iii); (2) the surcharge fee required by 37 CFR 1.17(t) has been submitted; and (3) the petition contains a proper statement of unintentional delay. Accordingly, having found that the instant petition for acceptance of an unintentionally delayed claim for the benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to the above-noted, prior-filed nonprovisional application satisfies the conditions of 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), the petition is granted.

The granting of the petition to accept the delayed benefit claim to the prior-filed application under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) should not be construed as meaning that the instant application is entitled to the benefit of the prior-filed application. In order for the instant application to be entitled to the benefit of the prior-filed application, all other requirements under 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(1) and (a)(2) must be met. Similarly, the fact that the corrected Filing Receipt accompanying this decision on petition includes the prior-filed application should not be construed as meaning that applicant is entitled to the claim for benefit of priority to the prior-filed application noted thereon. Accordingly, the examiner will, in due course, consider this benefit claim and determine whether the instant application is entitled to the benefit of the earlier filing date.

A corrected Filing Receipt, which includes the priority claim to the prior-filed nonprovisional

¹ Note MPEP 201.11 (V), page 200-75 (Rev. 1. Feb. 2004 and 66 Federal Register 67087 at 67089 (Dec. 28, 2001), effective December 28, 2001.

application, accompanies this decision on petition.

The application file does not indicate a change of address has been filed in this case, although the address given on the petition differs slightly from the address of record. A change of address should be filed in this case in accordance with MPEP 601.03. A courtesy copy of this decision is being mailed to the address noted on the petition. However, until otherwise instructed, all future correspondence regarding this application will be mailed solely to the address of record.

Any inquiries concerning this decision may be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3230. All other inquiries concerning either the examination procedures or status of the application should be directed to the Technology Center.

This application is being forwarded to Technology Center Art Unit 1638 for appropriate action on the amendment filed August 2, 2004 (certificate of mailing date July 28, 2004), including consideration by the examiner of applicant's entitlement to claim benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to the prior-filed nonprovisional application.



Frances Hicks

Lead Petitions Examiner
Office of Petitions
Office of the Deputy Commissioner
for Patent Examination Policy

ATTACHMENT: Corrected Filing Receipt

cc: RICHARD F. TRECARTIN
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